(c) whether Government are aware of the amount and area of land that has become waste and crops and forests damaged due to the rapid growth of this grass; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) It is learnt that the species *Parthenium hysterophorus* Linn (Family Asteraceae) was recorded in West Bengal as early as 1845. The occurrence of the same species, also known as 'Congress Grass' was reported from Pune in 1956. It is stated that the Weed was introduced through foodgrains under the PL-480 Scheme.

(b) Scientists of the Botanical Survey of India have observed and studied the features of 'Congress Grass', and also the possibilities of using other species to check the growth of the weed.

(c) and (d) Congress Grass has currently occupied large areas of agricultural and non-agricultural land in the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka. However, no data is available about the exact area of its spread.

Expenditure on the National Museum of Natural History

257. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of annual expenditue on the National Museum of Natural History;

(b) the expenditure on the emoluments of the employees of the Museum;

(c) what is the total strength of the staff therein; and

(d) the number of Senior staff who have visited such museums in other parts of the world?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) The annual expenditure on the National Museum of Natural History during the financial year 1991-92 was Rs. 115.99 lakhs.

(b) The expenditure on the emoluments of the employees of the Museum during the financial year 1991-92 was Rs. 31.92 lakhs.

(c) The total strength of the Museum staff is 122.

(d) 10 members of the staff of the Museum have visited museums in other parts of the world.

Prevention of cruelty to animals

258. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases detected under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals act during the last three years;

(b) the animals against whom the cruelty was done;

(c) whether any convictions were made or penalties imposed; and

(d) the steps being taken for the effective implemantetion of this legislation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) The State/Union Territory Government of Gujarat, Sikkim, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Andaman Nicobar Islands, Punjab, Tripura, Daman & Diu, Rajasthan, Mizoram, Orissa and Meghalaya have reported datection of 21181 cases under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960 during the last three years.

(b) Acts of Cruelty were generally committed against Buffaloes, Camals, Goats, Sheeps, Cows, Dogs, Bulls, Monkeys and birds.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Measures Taken to implement the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960 include the following:

(i) Animal Welfare Board has taken up training programme for mem-

bers of the SPCAs and also taken up steps to create public awareness.

(ii) State Governments are being pursued to nominate nodal officers for coordinating animal welfare activities.

(iii) Financial support is being extended to SPCAs to enable them to step up their animal welfare activities and take up prosecutions.

(iv) State Governments have been advised to set up State Advisory Welfare Board.

Indian Plywood Industries Research Institute, Bangalore

259. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the nature and amount of grants given to the Indian Plywood Industries Research Institute, Bangalore during the last three years;

(b) whether Government have any control over its management;

(c) if so, what is the nature of its management; and

(d) whether its report for the last three years have been made available in the Parliament Library?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d) The Indian Plywood Industries Research and Training Institute, Bangalore, is an autonomous organisation assisted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests dealing with research and utilisation aspects pertaining to Plywood Industry and also undertaking training activities through the Centre for Mechanical Wood Industries established within the Institute.

Government of India provide financial assistance in the shape of Grants-in-aid on year to year basis. The amount of such grants given to the Institute during the last three years is given below:

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Year	Amount
1989-90.....	Rs. 49.212
1990-91.....	Rs. 50.000
1991-92.....	Rs. 86.570

The general superintendence, direction and control of the Institute are vested in a Board of Governors of which Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Govenment of India, is the Chairman and the Director, Indian Plywood Industries Research and Training Institute is the Member-Secretary. This Board of Governor comprising Govt. representatives and some representatives from private industries provides guidance and directions on policy and other matters concerning the overall development of the Institute.

The annual reports of the Institute for 1989-90 and 1990-91 have been placed on the table of both the Houses. Reports for 1991-92 is being placed before the Annual General Meeting of the Society of the Institute shortly. Thereafter, it will be placed on the table of the Houses of Parliament.

Chilka Acquaculture Project

260. SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the growing agitation of the people against the implementation of the 20 crore Chilka acquaculture project by the Tatas on the ground that the project if implemented will harm the eco-system;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to re-examine the project from the environmental point of view;

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government of Orissa has since allotted 380 acres of additional land for the said Project; and